



The CAN Corner

"Together We CAN!"

Welcome to the CAN Corner!

The Citizen's Action Network was created so that dependable and proactive volunteers can assist the Coast Guard in protecting waterways and nearby communities in the Pacific Northwest.

CAN Members who notice a problem or suspicious activity should call the American Waterways Watch hotline at: 1-877-24-WATCH (1-877-249-2824).

Coast Guard's Innovation Expo

The Coast Guard's annual Innovation Expo was held this year during the last week of October at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans. District Thirteen was represented by Lieutenant Commander Andre Billeaudeaux and Petty Officer 3rd Class David Marin to pitch CAN's expansion to national status. The Coast Guard has a goal is to implement a program that can better protect the nation by using ground-breaking solutions like CAN that incorporate the

civilian population's participation. Many guest speakers including Coast Guard Commandant, Admiral Thad Allen discussed critical issues such as collaboration opportunities with prominent government and industry leaders to get the word out about CAN to other districts. Initiatives to resolve organizational challenges like saving money for the Coast Guard and tax payers was also addressed. Other considerations included mission prioritization and environmental

protection plans for oil spills and other potential hazards.

District Thirteen representatives focused on the proposed expansion of the Citizen's Action Network from the current local movement in Puget Sound into a nationwide campaign. The Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security are bridging the gap to citizens across the country in order to provide people with access to a great program that will benefit their local communities and the nation as a whole.

A Message from Commander D.P. Verfaillie USCG



As the Chief of Marine Environmental Response and the new "face" of CAN for the Thirteenth Coast Guard District, I would like to reemphasize the critical role our CAN members play in the world of Coast Guard response operations.

Some members may still have questions on how their contributions directly affect Coast Guard response. Simply put – it saves lives and reduces the potential risks to both Coast Guard members and those in distress. Every time we launch a resource – be it a surface or air asset – that evolution poses an inherent risk to the crews operating those resources. If we can narrow a search area, locate a person or vessel faster, or provide early information on the impacts of an oil spill based on input from our CAN members, we can; one: minimize the time our crews are exposed to hazardous conditions, and/or two: perhaps free-up scarce resources needed to respond to simultaneous incidents.

As one would imagine, with another Pacific Northwest winter upon us, the need for additional eyes on the water increases exponentially, as the number of boaters and casual beachgoers decreases. Add to this mix, the increased frequency of winter storms and the reduction of daylight hours available to Coast Guard search and rescue assets, and one can easily see why we need you more than ever before.

As the holidays come and go and we move towards the New Year, I challenge each of you – along with your New Year's resolutions to lose a few pounds or start walking regularly – to recruit two new members to join the CAN family. What better way to start the year than by potentially saving a life or protecting the environment. Remember, "Together We Can!"

A Message from Commodore Bruce Miller USCG Auxiliary



Members of the Citizen's Action Network can get even more involved in the mission and activities of the Coast Guard by joining the Auxiliary. Best known for its work with boating safety classes and Vessel Safety Checks, the Auxiliary has also helped save countless lives through their work.

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary is composed of uniformed, non-military citizen volunteers who assist the Coast Guard in all of its varied missions, except for military and direct law enforcement. These patriotic men and women can be found on the nation's waterways, in the air, in classrooms, and on the docks, often serving side-by-side with Coast Guardsmen, while performing Maritime Domain Awareness patrols and watches, water safety patrols, vessel safety checks, and public education.

The Auxiliary was founded in 1939 by an act of Congress as the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve and re-designated as the Auxiliary in 1941. Its 27,000 members donate millions of hours annually in support of Coast Guard missions.

Why should you become an Auxiliarist? Besides serving our country, we enjoy fellowship in all activities - the good company of other Auxiliarists at meetings and training sessions, on patrols and other missions, and at ceremonies and social events. You are always welcome to drop in on your local Auxiliary meeting. For information on the Auxiliary, call (800) 982-8813 ext. 7020 or log on to <http://www.D13CGAUX.org>.

As a Nation, We CAN

By Mandi Ruch

In an era that seems to promote self-preservation more and more, finding someone you can rely on to watch your back can be very difficult. The concept of a 'good neighbor' has become a reminiscent notion from 'the good old days' for many people. Today, most people don't even know their neighbor's names. Interaction is often limited to a wave or quick 'hello' in passing, if they have any contact at all. Instead of keeping an eye out for our neighbor, the new inclination seems to be keeping an eye *on* our neighbor.

Yet, despite the general, inherent distrust most people seem to have of other human beings, the nautical community is still championing the concept of goodwill and concern for fellow mariners. Anywhere in the world, on the water, vessels in distress can send out an S-O-S signal and rely upon any entity in the vicinity to answer with help or to relay the call to a responder capable of providing the assistance needed. Regardless of whether it's the common love of the water, or perhaps the residual nautical tradition of mindfulness of fellow mariners, this characteristic of benevolence is not only restricted to sailing vessels; it is also exhibited by those living on or near the shores of oceans, lakes and rivers throughout the United States.

The Pacific Northwest contains some of the most intricate and complex coastal geographic regions in the US. With over 2,300 mile of shoreline and only 1,500 Coasties in the Thirteenth District (Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana), the Coast Guard needs as many extra eyes on the water as it can get. That's where more than 550 American and Canadian participants of the Citizen's Action Network (CAN) can help.

"The Coast Guard is the smallest of the nation's armed forces and has been charged with bringing security to a dynamic, unwieldy environment where foreign ships, their crews and hundreds of thousands of small vessels operate." Lt. Cmdr. Andre Billeaudeau, founder of the CAN program explains. "The Coast Guard needs the full support and cooperation of all loyal citizens within the Maritime Domain."

Billeaudeau recently traveled to New Orleans for the 2007 Coast Guard Innovation Expo in October, accompanied by Petty Officer 3rd Class David Marin, US Coast Guard Auxiliary

Commandant, Bruce Miller and CAN member and Auxiliast Bob Lyden, in order to promote CAN and recommend the program's deployment to national-level.

Coast Guard Commandant, Admiral Thad Allen gave a speech at the expo which highlighted the changes the agency is making to promote collaboration, cooperation and creativity in order to remain good stewards of taxpayer dollars and continue to be responsible guardians of US shores. While his reaction to the proposal of CAN's expansion was favorable, it may still be a while before the network is up and running from the Pacific to the Atlantic.

"It is not the only program or idea being pitched, and no matter how evident it is that the program works and is an important asset, the process to get it Coast Guard or nation wide is a time consuming process that requires a lot of patience." Marin said, the liaison responsible for Coast Guard communications to CAN members.

"We're in the works right now of evaluating the relationship of AWW to CAN and how we can build off the obvious synergies between the two programs. However, we are still in the initial evaluation phase and we do not have a firm path forward yet," said Ryan Owens, the civilian in charge of promoting America's Waterway Watch, another Coast Guard facilitated public watch program.

Despite the inevitable administrative red-tape involved in implementing and running such a program, CAN is very simple for the public to become involved in. Having a utilitarian view of the water is the only preliminary requirement.

"To join the USCG Citizen's Action Network, all you have to do is go to the CAN Website at <http://www.uscg.mil/d13/can/> and download an application to mail or fax into the Coast Guard. To get to the website you can simply go to your search engine and type in USCG Citizen's Action Network, and the website will appear," says CAN member Bob Lyden, who has been involved with the program since its start in 1999.

"Whether people are on board with the program from the beginning or whether they need some explanation, it is evident to all that the program just makes sense. It is a way to get invaluable

assistance and in turn save the Coast Guard and the tax payers' money, in turn allowing important Coast Guard assets to be available for missions with more urgency or importance," Marin said.

"CAN helps carry out the important duties of protecting the nation as these citizens, or any other un-affiliated maritime-oriented citizen, are by far more familiar with their waterfront communities and are therefore in the best position to help create effective solutions to unique problems," Billeaudeau explains.

The program's success is largely due to the fact that people living in specific areas including waterfronts, ports and rivers with a 'strategic view' are the ones who are the most beneficial to it. They know when something out of the ordinary is going on and they will take notice if there is something out of place or unusual. A patrol boat might not know if a vessel docked next to a bridge is normally moored there or if it is something that should immediately raise concern. A resident of the area that sees the bridge on a daily basis will know whether or not the boat is something that needs to be checked out. If it is, CAN is a way that individuals can get in touch with the Coast Guard. On the flip side, the network is also a valuable asset to the Coast Guard because it provides a way for Coasties to pin-point a member's location and communicate directly about issues that might be occurring in their area. This in particular is a feature unique to CAN, and is one of the foremost reasons the Coast Guard is working to incorporate the program into a nation-wide network.

"The response to the Citizen's Action Network in District Thirteen and in British Columbia has been an overwhelming success" said Lyden. "I would like to see thousands of CAN members around the country work to assist the Coast Guard in all of their missions."

If the characteristics of neighborly habits and concern for fellow citizens exhibited by the original Puget Sound CAN members are in any way standard to other nautical localities, there is no doubt that the Citizen's Action Network will grow into a nationwide community of citizens assisting with Coast Guard missions and helping to develop and promote safer neighborhoods both on and around the water surrounding all US shores.

New CAN Members Wanted!

Over 40 new volunteers have signed up to be members of the Citizen's Action Network in 2007, increasing our total roster to over 250!

CAN is successful in aiding the Coast Guard by supplying information as well as saving taxpayers thousands of dollars. It costs approximately \$1,200 per hour to operate a Coast Guard 47-foot motor lifeboat. A helicopter or larger cutter may cost anywhere from \$9,000 to \$12,000 an hour. CAN members can reduce search times by providing valuable on-scene information when they are called by command centers. Because of Puget Sound's proximity to Canada, CAN also works closely with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who has their own CAN program with another

250 members, bringing our total CAN network to over 500 members! Together, we are working to protect all of our borders, shorelines and waterways.

If any of your friends or neighbors have access to a phone and a view of the water, they may be eligible to join CAN. Even if they have the same view of the water as other CAN members, they will still be of service.

You can help us expand our network by spreading the word to anyone who may be interested in becoming a Citizen's Action Network volunteer, or would like more information on the program. To join CAN, simply contact the 13th Coast Guard District Public Affairs Office at (206) 220-7237 or visit the Citizen's Action Network website at <http://www.uscg.mil/>

THE COAST GUARD WANTS YOU

AND YOUR PHOTOS OR VIDEO

The Coast Guard would like to show the world what our CAN members can do! If you have any photos or video of you or any events that you may have been involved in contributing to the Coast Guard, please send them to the District 13 Public Affairs Office at D13IPA@uscg.mil for review and possible posting to the Coast Guard D13 publications and future newsletters.